

March 8, 2010

To: NITC Commissioners
From: Anne Byers
Subject: Community Council Report

Broadband Mapping and Planning. On January 13, 2010, the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) awarded the Nebraska Public Service Commission \$2.1 million in stimulus funding for broadband mapping and planning activities. The state data will be submitted to the NTIA for inclusion in the national broadband database expected to be publicly available by February, 2011.

The NPSC has selected a contractor, Apex CoVantage, through a competitive bidding process, to gather broadband data and map that data for Nebraska. Apex CoVantage plans to open a temporary office and hire Nebraska residents to assist in the broadband data collection, verification and mapping portion of the grant. A public meeting was held on February 9, 2010 to explain the process and provide information to broadband providers.

The broadband planning portion of the grant awarded will be a collaborative process led by the Nebraska Information Technology Commission's (NITC) Community Council, University of Nebraska – Lincoln (UNL), and Nebraska Department of Economic Development (DED). A number of approaches will be used to develop both regional and statewide plans to address the broadband needs of Nebraska communities. A statewide mail survey is currently underway to determine the current utilization of Internet service across the state. The survey will also identify barriers to the adoption of broadband Internet service and other information technology services. Members of the Community Council were asked to review the survey. Information from the survey, along with broadband mapping results, will be shared at regional forums. Additional information will be gathered through focus groups and Department of Economic Development business surveys. During the second year of the grant, targeted demonstration workshops and training will be offered to encourage greater use of technology that broadband can deliver with the goal of greater adoption of broadband service.